CASE STUDY ONE

How Did the Exchange of Ideas and Knowledge During the Renaissance Shape the Worldviews of the Western World?

Michelangelo Showing a Pupil the Belvedere Torso, Jean-Léon Gérôme, oil on canvas, 1849

What do you think the painting at the left, *Michelangelo Showing a Pupil the Belvedere Torso*, is about? The painter, Gérôme, is showing an imaginary scene between the great Italian artist Michelangelo and his student. The Belvedere torso is part of an ancient Greek sculpture that was discovered in the 1400s and inspired Michelangelo to rethink how artists could portray the human body to show its fullness and its movement. It was one of those moments in history that changed the way people viewed the world. It was a key event in the development of the **Renaissance**.

Of all the time periods in Europe's history, the Renaissance, which stretched from about 1350 CE to 1600 CE, is one of the most notable **eras**. From our viewpoint in the 21st century, we look back at this period that began more than 650 years ago as the time when the modern Western worldview began to develop.

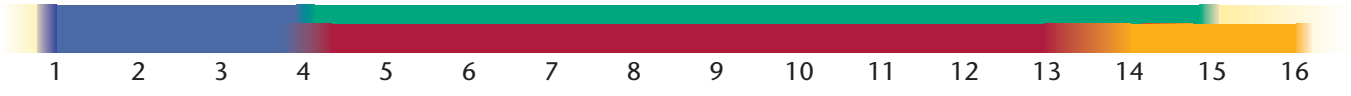
The word *Renaissance* comes from the French word *renaître,* which means "to be born again." This renaissance or rebirth refers to a period of innovation based on the rediscovery of ancient Greek and Roman thinking and the thinking of other civilizations Europeans came into contact with. Many of the ideas found in these documents had been lost or ignored in western Europe for nearly 1000 years. When European scholars rediscovered these classical documents that Muslim and Jewish scholars and the Roman Catholic Church had preserved and studied, they discovered new ideas and ways of looking at the world.

Renaissance: a historical period that originated in Italy in the 14th century, known for the revival of classical art, architecture, literature, and learning

CE: Common Era, referring to a way of numbering years, accepted commonly throughout the world, numbering from the birth of Jesus Christ

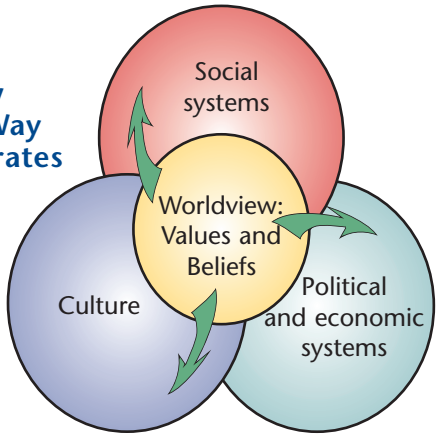
era: a historical time period

Europe: 1st Century Through the 16th Century

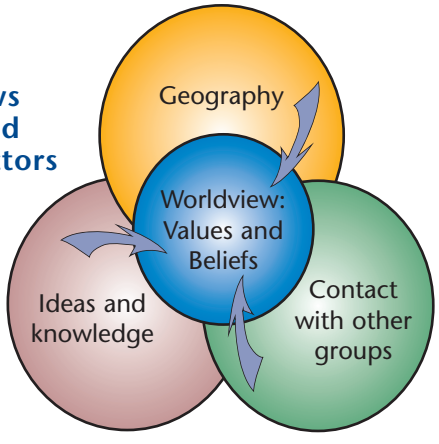


1–4 centuries Roman Empire; 4–15 centuries Byzantine Empire; 4–14 centuries Middle Ages; 14–16 centuries Renaissance

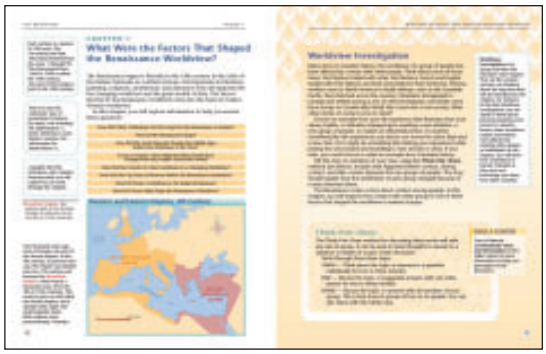
Worldview Affects the Way a Society Operates

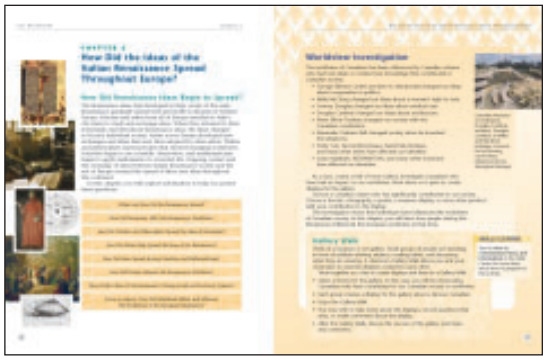


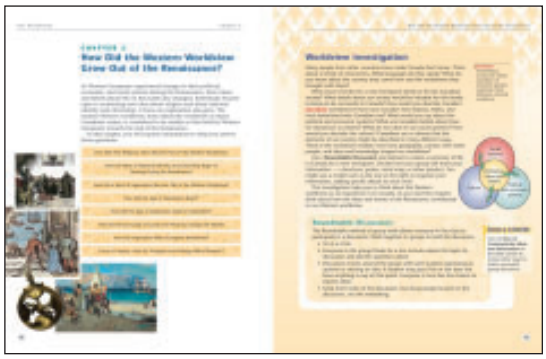
Worldviews Are Shaped by These Factors



As you learn about the Renaissance in this case study, you will see how the worldviews of communities and individuals of that historical period changed as contact with other cultures introduced new ideas and knowledge. You will see how the people lived and the influences that shaped their worldviews. You will learn about individual citizens of the time whose contributions to their societies helped shape worldviews and spread the new ideas throughout Europe. Finally, you will see how the Renaissance worldview relates to today's Western worldview.







Chapter 1: What Were the Factors That Shaped the Renaissance Worldview?

Chapter 2: How Did the Ideas of the Italian Renaissance Spread Throughout Europe?

Chapter 3: How Did the Western Worldview Grow Out of the Renaissance?

THINK ABOUT IT

- Today, some people believe that Canada is an example of a society undergoing change and adopting new values and beliefs. As a class, brainstorm to develop a list of values and beliefs that you think represent Canada. Discuss whether any of these ideas suggest Canada is a Renaissance society, representing a flourishing of new ideas and a rebirth of knowledge or showing new ways of looking at the world.
- You are now beginning your study of a new topic: worldview and the Renaissance. Jot down questions that you have about worldview and the Renaissance. Also include any knowledge you already have about these topics. Use an organizer, such as a web or a chart, to organize your information.

SKILLS CENTRE

Turn to **How to Organize Information** in the Skills Centre for more information to help you organize your questions and previous knowledge.

Use the **Skills Centre** at the back of the text for reference whenever you need more information about a certain skill. In this case, you can turn to the Skills Centre and find information on ways to organize information.

Each century is a period of 100 years. The 1st century (the first 100 years) stretched from the years 1 through 99. The time period from 1300 to 1399 is called the 14th century. Any year in that range is part of the 14th century.

This text uses the customary way of presenting Common Era dates, not including the abbreviation CE. Dates referring to years Before Common Era will include the abbreviation BCE.

A graphic like this introduces each chapter, showing what you will explore as you work through the chapter.

Byzantine Empire: the eastern part of the Roman Empire in existence from the 4th to 15th centuries

Two thousand years ago, most of Europe was part of the Roman Empire. In the 4th century, to prevent civil war, the empire was divided into two. The eastern part became the **Byzantine Empire**, which lasted a thousand years, from the 4th to 15th centuries. The western part was still called the Roman Empire, but it quickly broke apart into small separate states. Both empires were predominantly Christian.

CHAPTER 1

What Were the Factors That Shaped the Renaissance Worldview?

The Renaissance began to flourish in the 14th century in the cities of the Italian Peninsula in southern Europe. Developments in literature, painting, sculpture, architecture, and education were all supported by the changing worldview and the great wealth of Italy. The factors that led to the Renaissance worldview were also the basis for today's Western worldview.

In this chapter, you will explore information to help you answer these questions:

- How Did Other Civilizations Set the Stage for the Renaissance in Europe?
- How Did the Renaissance Begin?
- How Did the Social Structure During the Middle Ages Reflect the Worldview of the Time?
- Focus on Inquiry: How Might the Black Death Have Changed the Way People Viewed the World?
- How Did the Growth of Cities Contribute to a Changing Worldview?
- How Did the City-State of Florence Reflect the Renaissance Worldview?
- How Did Venice Contribute to the Italian Renaissance?
- How Did Genoa Help Shape the Renaissance Worldview?

Western and Eastern Empires, 4th Century

Worldview Investigation

Many times in Canada's history, the worldview of a group of people has been affected by contact with other people. Think about some of those times: First Nations traded with other First Nations; French and English traded with First Nations and Inuit and settled in their territories; Chinese workers came to North America to build railways, such as the Canadian Pacific, that stretched across the country; Ukrainians immigrated to Canada and settled among a mix of other immigrants; war brides came from Europe to Canada after World War II and met a new society. What other stories of contact come to mind?

Choose an example from your life experience that illustrates how your values, beliefs, or attitudes changed upon meeting a new situation, a new group of people, or maybe an influential person. It could be something like the experiences you had as you moved to junior high and a new class. Or it might be something like relating your experiences after joining the school band and travelling to new schools or cities. If you wish, you could choose to relate an example from Canadian history.

Tell the story to members of your class, using the **Think–Pair–Share** method (see below). Include what happened before contact, during contact, and after contact between the two groups of people. The story should explain how the worldviews of each group changed because of contact between them.

The Renaissance is also a story about contact among people. In this chapter, you will explore how contact with other groups is one of three factors that shaped the worldview in western Europe.

Worldview Investigations are group activities that introduce each chapter. They set the context and get you thinking about the big ideas that will be introduced in the chapter. For instance, in this first Worldview Investigation, you are asked to think about personal situations and events in Canada's history when worldview (values and beliefs) were affected by meeting other groups or individuals. In this chapter, you will learn how worldviews in Europe changed as they met new knowledge and ideas from other societies.

Think–Pair–Share

The Think–Pair–Share method for discussing ideas works well with any size of group. It can be used to share thoughts in answer to a question or details of a topic under discussion.

Work through these three steps:

THINK — Think about the topic or answers to a question individually for two to three minutes.

PAIR — Discuss the topic or suggested answers with one other person for two to three minutes.

SHARE — Discuss the topic or answers with all members of your group. This is best done in groups of four to six people. You can also share with the whole class.

SKILLS CENTRE

Turn to **How to Communicate Ideas and Information** in the Skills Centre for more information to help you participate in this discussion.

How Did Other Civilizations Set the Stage for the Renaissance in Europe?

Middle Ages: a historical period in Europe stretching from the fall of the Roman Empire in the 4th century to the beginning of the Renaissance in the 14th century

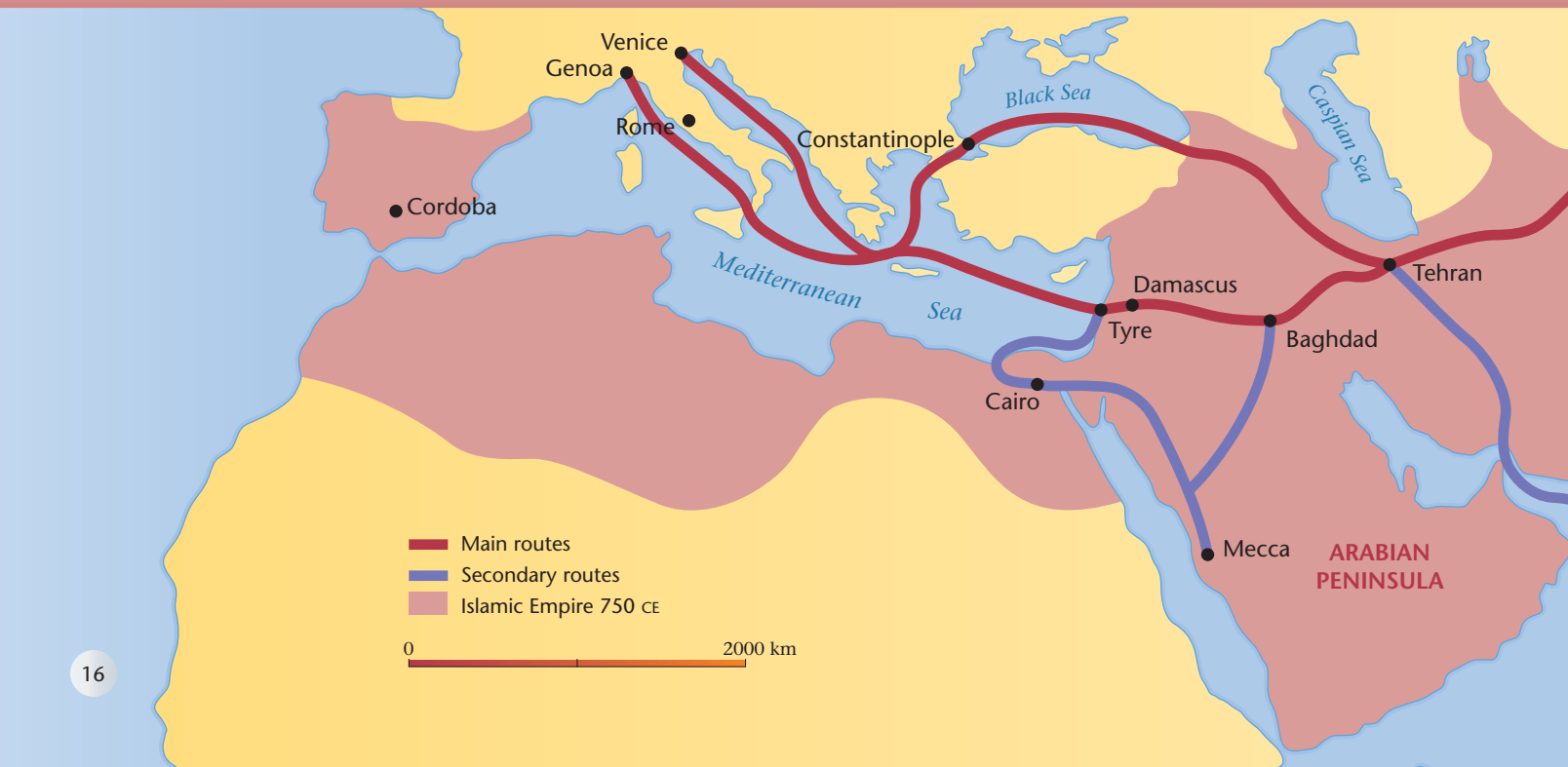
During the time period known as the **Middle Ages** in Europe, many civilizations flourished in other parts of the world. In the Americas, the great Mayan Empire had reached its peak and the Incan and Aztec Empires were beginning to flourish. Empires in Africa from the 8th to 17th centuries, such as the Ghana, Mali, and Songhai Empires, were centres of learning, trade, and wealth. But it was the empires in Asia and northern Africa that would have the most impact on Europe's moving out of the Middle Ages and into its Renaissance.

The word *Europe* has two possible origins. One is from the Greek word *Europa*, meaning "broad face." Another is from the ancient Akkadian word *erebu*, which meant "to go down" or "to set." To the Akkadians, who lived in what is now Iraq, Europe was in the west, the lands where the sun set.

The Silk Road

From about 300 BCE, when the Roman Empire extended into what is now the Middle East, people in the West had welcomed exotic goods from as far away as China and Japan. These items, such as silks, glassware, paper, or spices such as pepper and cinnamon, were extremely rare, moving from trader to trader as they travelled on foot or by caravan along a network known as the Silk Road. Movement of goods went both ways. Inventions such as the irrigation waterwheel, invented in the region around Damascus, moved in both directions,

The Silk Road



being found in the far western reaches of the Islamic civilization and as far east as Cathay (China). Apples developed in central Asia moved to both the East and the West. Oranges, originally from China, made their way to the Mediterranean world; grapes from the Mediterranean made their way to China. Most often, items passed through so many hands that their original source was not known. But wherever these items came from, Europeans desired them. These consumer demands spurred many people to become traders, increasing the links of the societies along the Silk Road.

I wonder … what would it have been like to be a trader along the Silk Road?

I wonder … what countries today lie along the route of the Silk Road?

Not all the things that moved along the Silk Road were good; disease also passed from caravan to caravan. Possibly the most famous example is the Black Death that came from central Asia to the Mediterranean. The Black Death resulted in the deaths of millions of people throughout Europe and Asia.

Perhaps more important than the material goods that moved along the Silk Road were ideas and knowledge. Understandings of religion, science, technology, philosophy, music, and mathematics passed from society to society along the Silk Road. Above all, there was a sharing of worldviews.

Family of Marco Polo travelling by camel caravan, *Catalan Atlas*, 1375

The Role of Islamic Civilization

astrolabe: an instrument used to measure the locations of stars and planets as an aid to navigation

After its beginnings in the 7th century, the Islamic faith spread quickly from its beginning in the Arabian Peninsula. It moved westward across North Africa. By 750, what is now Spain was under Muslim control. To the east, Islam spread through what is now Iraq and Iran, into India, and continued to the islands of Indonesia.

The centre of the Islamic world was at the crossroads of the Silk Road trading routes. All trade between the Far East and Europe was controlled by Muslim middlemen. This brought great wealth to the Muslim world. More importantly, it made the Muslim Empires centres of learning during Europe's Middle Ages. The Muslim faith promoted scholarship and inquiry, and scholars collected knowledge and documents from the then-known world. Libraries across the empire, in centres such as Baghdad, Cairo, and Cordoba, preserved these documents and those of Islamic scholars.

Wise Men and Astronomers in the Galata [Turkey] *Observation Tower*, Ottoman miniature, 16th century. Knowledge collected by Islamic astronomers through the Middle Ages and into the 1500s was used by European scientists.

Islamic scientists and scholars pursued knowledge in many areas. They took mathematical ideas from India and refined them into the understanding of numbers known today. They studied astronomy and added to the understanding of the movement of planets. They used their understanding of astronomy to invent aids to navigation, such as the **astrolabe**. Scientists, such as Ibn Sina (980–1037), studied diseases and the human body and wrote medical texts that were used for hundreds of years throughout the world.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. Think about how difficult it was to move trade goods from China to Italy in the Middle Ages. Compare the transportation of those trade goods to how they would be transported today.
2. Explain how the geographic location of the Islamic Empire made it a centre for learning and discovery from 750 to 1100. Use the map of the Silk Road to help you answer.
3. Suppose you would like to research the origin of a silk or cotton shirt. List all the methods by which you might be able to gain information about it. How might this availability of information about so many things affect worldview?

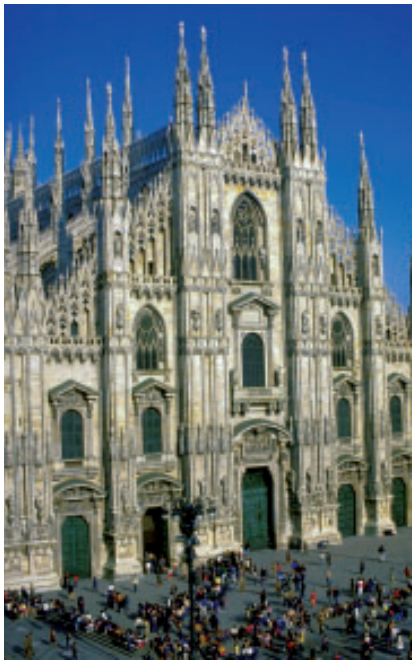
How Did the Renaissance Begin?

At the beginning of the 1300s, Europe was still very much a society of the Middle Ages. But change was slowly beginning to occur. Contact with other cultures was increasing and the exchange of ideas was spurring change. By the end of the 1300s, in Italy especially, change was happening more rapidly and society was moving into a new period, later called the Renaissance.

To better understand the past, historians assign specific titles or labels to certain eras. For example, the time span in western Europe between 1350 and 1600 is referred to as the Renaissance. The period of time before the Renaissance and after the downfall of the western Roman Empire is referred to as the Middle Ages or the Medieval Period, since it is in the middle or in between two major historical times in Europe, stretching from the 4th century to the 14th century.

During the Middle Ages, most Christian Europeans shared a religious worldview that God was the centre of human existence. The beliefs of the poor presented a worldview in which they accepted a harsh, short life on Earth, believing they would be rewarded after death by going to heaven. Wealthier people also lived life with religion as the central point of their beliefs. They looked to the afterlife and donated money and property to the Roman Catholic Church, hoping that God would reward them with heaven.

The art and architecture of the Middle Ages were influenced by religion because almost every European thinker and artist worked for the Church. Rarely did anyone disagree with the Church's ideas about the world or the way people should lead their lives. No one questioned the importance of religion. Church officials were seen as God's chosen representatives. The head of the Church, the pope, was a powerful man, ruling both the Roman Catholic Church and the wealthy papal state, with Rome at its centre. He had a major influence on kings and their kingdoms, as well as on people's beliefs and actions. There were often power struggles between the pope and the monarchs.



Milan Cathedral, Italy, constructed 1386 to 1418. The importance of religion to life in the Middle Ages and Renaissance is shown by the grandeur of European cathedrals.

I wonder … what do buildings and structures show about the historical periods when they were built?

In times past, historians often referred to the time period of the Middle Ages as the Dark Ages in Europe. Thinking has changed. Historians now recognize that since Europe had divided into many small states, developments were occurring at the local level rather than on the grand scale of empires such as the Roman Empire. At the same time, though, large civilizations flourished in other parts of the world: Chinese, Mongol, and Indian cultures in Asia, Songhai and other cultures in Africa, Islamic cultures in Asia, Africa, and parts of Europe, and Mayan and Aztec cultures in Mexico and Central America.

Examine the map of Europe, which was drawn in 1335, during the Middle Ages. Opicinus de Canistris, the mapmaker, used both human figures and non-human figures to represent different parts of Europe. What does this map show about how people of this time period viewed the world?

Opicinus de Canistris Map of Europe

The Crusades

During the late Middle Ages, armies from Europe organized **crusades** to try to recapture areas of the Middle East that were under Muslim control. Jews, Christians, and Muslims all considered these areas holy because that is where their religions had their roots. **Judaism**, **Christianity**, and **Islam** all grew out of the same religious history. Each group at the time wanted control of the area. Christians believed that control of the Holy Land should be in Christian hands.

History shows that the Christian control of the Holy Land was short-lived. However, the results for Europe were huge. Entire armies travelling through the Eastern Roman Empire, or Byzantine Empire, and meeting up with the Islamic world, were exposed to a way of life very different from their own. Thousands of religious **pilgrims** — men, women, and children — also visited the holy sites and met different societies. Europeans became more aware of other cultures. They encountered new ideas and knowledge, as well as new foods, spices, cloth, and other exotic goods. Travellers returned to their homes with new ideas and attitudes that led to new ways of thinking about their own lives and their own societies.

crusade: a campaign in favour of a cause; historically, a medieval Christian military expedition to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims

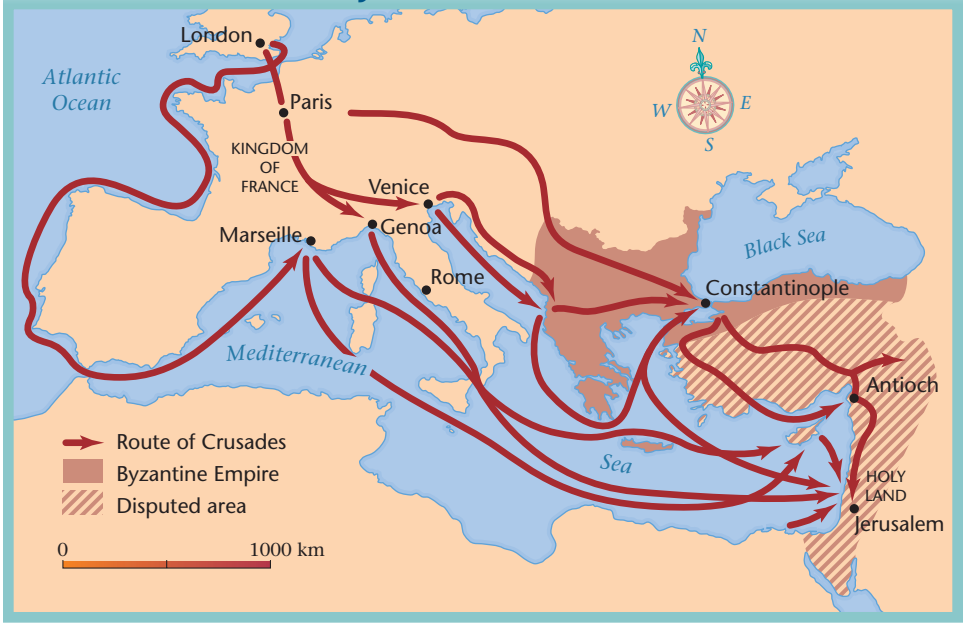
Judaism: the religion of the Jews, based on a belief in one God, as told in the Hebrew Bible, referred to as the Old Testament by Christians, and the teaching of rabbis

Christianity: the religion of the Christians, based on a belief in one God, as told in the Old Testament of the Bible and the teaching of Jesus in the New Testament

Islam: the religion of the Muslims, based on a belief in one God, based on the teachings of Muhammad as revealed in the Koran (Qur'an)

pilgrim: a person who journeys to a sacred place for religious purposes

Crusades to the Holy Land, 1095–1291



This map indicates the main travel routes Europeans used during the Crusades. Control of the disputed areas went back and forth between Christians and Muslims.

In the Middle Ages, most Western Europeans belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. There were no other Christian denominations.

The Crusades occurred over hundreds of years. The relationships among Christians and Muslims developed in various ways during periods of peace and periods of war.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. What were key factors that led to the beginning of the Renaissance?
2. Identify two different ways in which religion affected the worldview at this time.
3. Many factors help to shape your identity. Think of an experience you have had in which you encountered different ways of doing things, different architecture, different foods, or perhaps different music. How did ideas about yourself and the world change because of this experience?
4. During the Middle Ages, wealthy individuals often donated money to the Roman Catholic Church to be used to help the poor. Today, this would be considered an act of responsible citizenship. Would those donations given in the Middle Ages have been looked at in the same way, considering the worldview of the time?

The **Influence** feature presents information about an individual or a group that had a major influence on the society of the time.

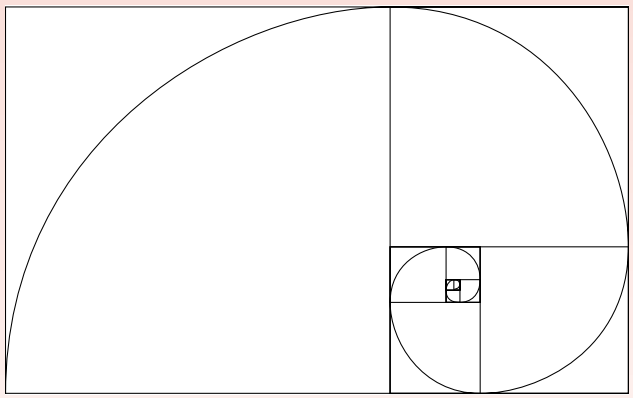
INFLUENCE

Leonardo Pisano Fibonacci

Leonardo Pisano Fibonacci (1170–1250) was born in Pisa, Italy, but was raised and educated in North Africa, surrounded by the scholarly Islamic world. He travelled the then-known world with his father, who was a merchant. Fibonacci saw great advantages in the mathematical systems used in the Islamic world compared to the Roman numeral system used in Europe. His first book described the Hindu-Arabic place-value system and the use of Arabic numerals.

His book was of particular interest to merchants because it contained many mathematical problems about buying and selling items. These problems showed how to calculate profits from sales and how to convert between the various currencies used in the Mediterranean area at the time. His text also acted as a guide for the lending and borrowing of money. The introduction of Arabic numerals made calculations much easier for merchants.

Fibonacci lived in the Middle Ages, but he influenced both the Renaissance world and the modern world with his mathematical discoveries. Fibonacci is a good example of how an individual can influence the world by encountering knowledge held by others, taking it, and building new ideas from it.



Architects use this sequence of spirals and rectangles in their buildings, as it is considered pleasing to the human eye.

I II III V VIII XIII XXI

1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, …

The Fibonacci sequence is a series of numbers in which each number is the sum of the two numbers before it. What would be the next number in the sequence as shown here? In the diagram, each section of the spiral grows according to the sequence. This spiral represents many situations in nature. The spirals in seashells match up to this sequence. Seedheads of sunflowers and other flowers follow the same spiral pattern. So, too, do pine cones.

How Did the Social Structure During the Middle Ages Reflect the Worldview of the Time?

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the **feudal system** developed in much of Europe. In this system, monarchs often granted land to important nobles in return for their military support. In other cases, powerful landholding nobles were persuaded through **diplomacy** to form **alliances** and give support to a central monarch. The nobles promised to provide the monarch with soldiers and supplies in times of war, as well as support through taxes. They often subdivided their lands to lesser nobles or knights. Most of the common people were serfs — peasants were the property of their lords and worked the land for them. They were allowed to have their own houses but could not move to any other place. They had to give part of their crops and other products to the nobles who, in turn, sent much of it to the king and queen. The serfs also served as soldiers in time of war. In return, the nobles offered them protection from invaders.

feudal system: a political-economic-social system of landholding, in place in much of Europe in the Middle Ages. Class structure and roles were very rigid.

diplomacy: the skill or tact in handling negotiations, especially in government

alliance: a formal agreement to cooperate

hierarchical: based on classes of status or authority ranked one above the other

The social system in the feudal system was a **hierarchical** class structure. The monarch was the most powerful. The higher priests and clergy, who often owned land and serfs, had status and power just above that of the powerful nobles. Knights and lesser nobles, along with the lower clergy, were next in the hierarchy. The serfs, although making up the majority of the population (often 90% or more) had the least power and were at the bottom of the social hierarchy.

The identities of the serfs were tied to their lord. Their children would automatically be serfs at birth — moving outside a person's class was never a thought. A person's ability to change from the social class they were born into was not a part of the medieval worldview within the rigid social and government structures of the feudal system. The religious worldview also played a part in people's acceptance of the way things were, as people believed their situation was God's will and His will was not to be questioned.

Society was largely divided between the rich and the poor. Nobles and lords lived in huge castles or fortified manor houses. The servants who worked in the castle at jobs such as cooking, cleaning, or making weapons, also lived in the castle. Outside the castle walls, the serfs or peasants lived in huts.

Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry, a book of hours, Limbourg brothers, 1412–1416. There are no photographs of the Renaissance, but information can be found from paintings and drawings. These drawings come from a book of hours owned by a French Duke — Jean, Duc de Berry. Books of hours were beautifully illustrated books of prayers for certain hours during the day. These were expensive and spectacular works of art, so ownership was generally limited to royalty, nobility, and the wealthy. The illustration on the left shows a peasant using an ox-drawn plough; in the background, peasants tend vines, herd sheep, and prepare to sow grain. On the right, the Duc de Berry is shown in a lavish blue robe, with ladies and attendants. In the background, boatmen net fish in a pond, and the château and its garden can be seen. What do these pages tell you about the lives of nobles and peasants? Might you guess about differences in their worldviews?

REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. If you were a member of the family of serfs who lived in the small hut, what would be your daily concerns? How might you describe your identity — who you are, what you value, where you see yourself belonging? How do you think a family member living in the manor house would answer the same questions? How do you think the perspectives would differ? Would the worldviews of serfs and nobles have similarities?
2. How does the story of Fibonacci show that one individual can have a huge impact on a society?

FOCUS ON INQUIRY

How Might the Black Death Have Changed the Way People Viewed the World?

The **Focus on Inquiry** feature helps you understand each step in the Inquiry Model by working through inquiry projects that use each step of the model. By the end of the text, you will have practised each step of the Inquiry Model.

History Tells Us...

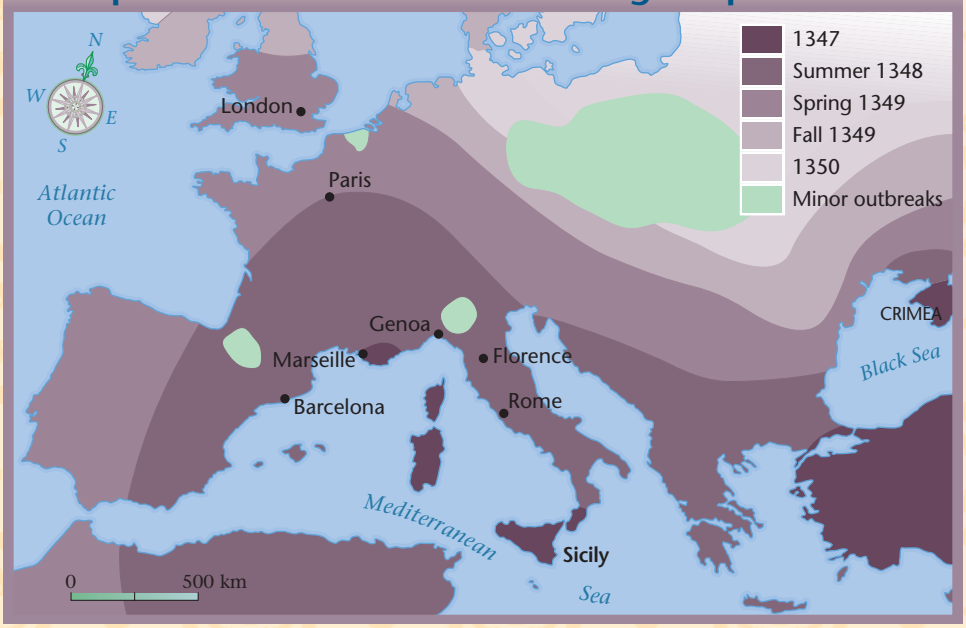
Towards the end of the Middle Ages, in the fall of 1347, Genoan trading ships returning from the Black Sea landed in Sicily. The sailors were either dead or dying of an unknown disease. Pus and blood oozed from painful black lumps in their armpits and groin, their skin looked bruised because of internal bleeding, and the smell of their breath, sweat, blood, urine, and excrement was horrible. Most of the sailors died within three to five days of catching the Black Death. This disease was the bubonic plague, a highly infectious illness.

The plague reappeared across Europe at least six times between 1347 and 1410, with each occurrence lasting four to six months. It disappeared in the winter and then reappeared in the spring for another six months. The first epidemic of the plague in Europe, called the **Pestilence** or the Great **Mortality**, lasted from 1347 to 1350. Outbreaks of the plague continued in Europe until the late 1700s.

pestilence: a usually fatal epidemic disease

mortality: death

The Spread of the First Bubonic Plague Epidemic



I wonder … why was bubonic plague called the Black Death?

I wonder … did the rats get sick from the plague?

I wonder … why did the plague disappear in the winter?

It was almost 500 years after the first epidemic before scientists discovered what caused the bubonic plague. Rats, which were a part of everyday life in Europe at that time, carried fleas. The bacteria that caused the plague lived on these fleas and spread quickly from rats to humans, since fleas can jump from one animal to another. Historians believe that the plague originally began in Asia and spread across the Eurasian continent.

I wonder … what did sanitation have to do with the spread of the plague?

The plague spread very quickly and sometimes caused death overnight. In the 1300s, little was known about the connection between hygiene and disease, and there was poor sanitation in the living conditions during the late Middle Ages. No one was safe from the plague. It attacked rich and poor, strong and weak, young and old. There was no prevention or cure. The poor in Italy were particularly at risk to the Great Mortality due to

- lack of food caused by recent flooding and famine
- homelessness because of the damage from a severe earthquake
- cooler than normal weather, forcing many to live in crowded conditions in small, dirty rooms

astrology: the study of planets, stars, and comets in the belief that their movements and positions affect daily life

People tried to understand what caused the Pestilence. Why was it killing entire villages and families? Why was it destroying their lives and jobs?

I wonder … why would doctors believe the plague was caused by planets?

- Medical doctors, who believed that health was linked to **astrology**, were convinced that the plague resulted from the movements of the planets Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars.
- Other people thought that the plague was a punishment sent by God.
- Others believed that it was caused by the Devil or magic.
- Others believed that burning incense would purify the air and keep the plague away.
- Others blamed cultural or ethnic groups of people different from their own group.

Estimated Daily Death Tolls

October–December 1347

Paris	800 per day
Pisa	500 per day
Vienna	600 per day
Avignon	400 per day

I wonder … why do people often blame things on people from groups different from themselves?

The Triumph of Death, Francesco Traini, 14th century

No one knows exactly how many people died from the bubonic plague epidemics, but most historians agree that by 1400, the population of Europe was about half of what it was two centuries earlier. Cities suffered most of the deaths, but once a rural community was infected, it was not uncommon for 90% of the residents to die. So many died that bodies were left to rot in the street or were buried in mass graves. Villages and families vanished without a trace because at that time in Europe, most villages had no name, the poor only had first names, and census records were very rare. Those who survived often had no friends or family left alive and moved to the cities to find a way to make a living.

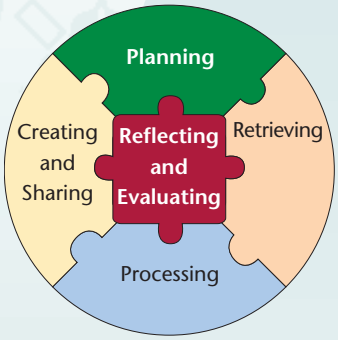
I wonder … why would more people die in the cities than in the countryside?

I wonder … what would happen today if a killer plague reached my community?

I wonder … if the plague came to my community, how would it change the way I think about my friends and family? How would it change the way I view the world?

I wonder … why would the poor only have first names?

The Dance of Death, fresco, Janez Kastav, 14th century, in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Hrastovlje, Slovenia. Artwork of this century reflects the images of death that were everywhere.



SKILLS CENTRE

Turn to **How to Carry Out an Inquiry** in the Skills Centre to review the Inquiry Model and for more information about how to write a research plan.

Using Your Inquiry Skills

There are many models of inquiry, but the one used in this text has five interconnected phases. Each chapter of this text provides a chance for you to explore one or more phases of this inquiry process. In this activity, you will practise the Planning phase. Reflecting and Evaluating is always done.

How might the Black Death have changed the way people viewed the world?

The bubonic plague has fascinated humankind for centuries. Fascination leads to questioning and then searching for answers. In this Focus on Inquiry, several *I wonder …* questions that other students might ask as they read about the plague are included as samples. What are other questions that you might have wondered about?

Planning Phase

Step 1 — Identify a topic

One of the first steps in the Planning phase is thinking of questions about a certain topic.

- As a class, use the Think–Pair–Share method to brainstorm for questions about the Black Death and how it might have changed the way people viewed the world.
- Working alone, select one question that you want to explore.

Step 2 — Identify possible information sources

Think about where you might find information to answer your question. List three or four kinds of resources that would be most useful in your search to explore your question. Why would they be useful? Where are they located?

Step 3 — Identify audience and presentation format

Choose a way to communicate your understanding to others. Select a presentation format (oral, visual, written, multimedia) and an audience (partner, small group, whole class, e-mail pen pal).

Reflecting and Evaluating Phase

- How did you think of questions about the plague?
- How did you select one question to focus on?
- What types of activities occur during the Planning phase?

How Did the Growth of Cities Contribute to a Changing Worldview?

Trade

By the late Middle Ages, Europeans wanted more of the exotic spices and silks that had been brought back by the crusaders. Merchants hired adventurers and sailors to open new trade routes to all parts of their known world, such as North Africa and the Middle East, and across land routes to India and China. These new trade routes began a revival in business and shipping in the Western world that had not existed since the Roman Empire. The increased contact with other societies and cultures, initially to obtain rare foods, fabrics, and other products, also introduced Europeans to different intellectual ideas and knowledge from other societies. Most came from contact with traders in Islamic societies who were located geographically between Europe and the Far East societies of China and Japan and the tropical areas of Africa to the south.

city-state: a city that governs itself and the countryside surrounding it

In Europe, the numbers of merchants and traders grew and so did their wealth. They became a powerful new class outside the hierarchy of the feudal system. Their wealth brought them power to influence leaders and led to a change in worldview. A person's role in the rigid structure of the feudal system might be able to change. People began to see that it was possible to move out of the class into which they had been born.

Because of increased trading, cities began to grow. By the middle of the 14th century, Paris, Florence, Venice, and Genoa were the largest cities in Europe, each with populations of at least 100 000. These larger urban populations increased the demand for foods and other products and led to changes in the way people lived:

- Some people established businesses to provide goods for city residents, and a new, wealthy merchant class began to grow.
- Industries began to specialize in goods for trade, such as textiles, furniture, and handicrafts, and more people moved to the cities to work in these industries.
- Workers began to find and create jobs that were not part of the feudal system and, thus, became less dependent on the nobles.
- Some communities became so prosperous and powerful from trade, industry, and banking that they became **city-states**.
- Individuals began to feel a sense of belonging to their larger communities, not just to their local lord.

Major Italian City-States

The Renaissance began in the major Italian city-states of Florence, Genoa, Venice, and Milan. These centres became wealthy and powerful because they were located on important trade routes within Italy, either old Roman roads or rivers. They were also located on trade routes linking the Eastern Mediterranean to the rest of Europe.

Urbanization

urbanization: the movement of population away from the countryside and into cities

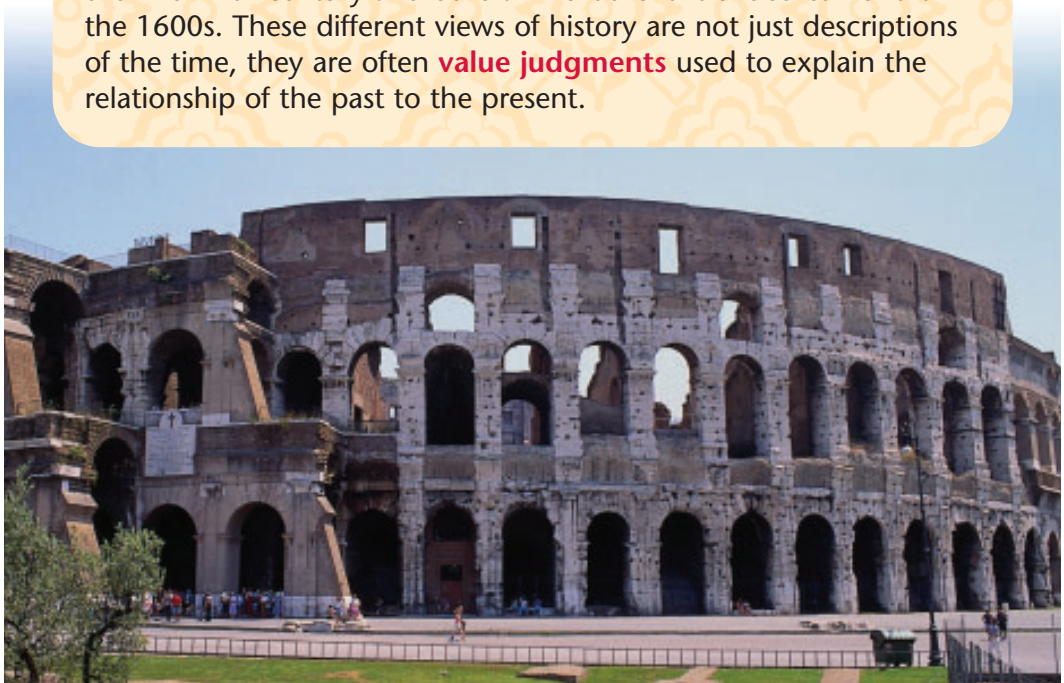
value judgment: an opinion based on a person's individual values and beliefs

After the first bubonic plague epidemic in 1350, Europe experienced more turmoil. There were too few peasants left alive to seed and harvest the land. Peasants decided they might be able to find better lives for themselves if they moved to the cities, especially the Italian cities on the Mediterranean. Many of the surviving nobles, who could no longer find labourers to work their lands, also moved to these cities. There were more opportunities for work in the Italian cities because of their established trade with other parts of the Mediterranean and because they had already built a successful shipping industry.

Within 50 years of the first bubonic plague, cities in Italy became very powerful, especially Florence, Genoa, Venice, and Milan. These cities became the most successful commercial centres of banking, trade, commerce, and industry in western Europe.

Effects of Good Government, Ambroglia Lorenzetti, 1338, showing city gate of Siena

There are no exact dates when one era ends and another begins. The Renaissance did not start on a certain date, nor did it have a sudden ending. It evolved gradually out of the Middle Ages and, in fact, had much in common with the Middle Ages. There are some historians who view the Renaissance as starting much earlier than the mid-14th century and others who believe it ended earlier than the 1600s. These different views of history are not just descriptions of the time, they are often **value judgments** used to explain the relationship of the past to the present.



The societies in what is now Italy, more than any other part of western Europe, maintained ties to ancient Roman ways of life after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. The ancient ruins of buildings, such as the Roman coliseum shown here, aqueducts, roads, cities, statues, and artifacts were constant reminders of the power and glory of the ancient Roman Empire.

There were several reasons why city-states prospered in Italy:

- Mountains to the north helped protect Italy from invaders. This allowed relatively stable development of the city-states.
- Trading cities began to thrive in Italy as early as the 10th century, which meant that life in the Italian Peninsula was already more urban than in northern Europe.
- The feudal system was not strong in Italy due to the urban lifestyle and lack of agricultural land.
- The architectural ruins of the glorious city-states of Ancient Rome reminded the population of how effective that style of government had been.
- The power of the Roman Catholic Church over the Italian city-states weakened when the pope and his **court** (the **papacy**) moved from Rome to Avignon, in southern France. Italian city-states could now govern themselves without much interference from the rulings of the Church. They were entirely independent and, initially, many of them organized themselves as individual **republics**.

Most Italian city-states began as republics. In a republic, a group of citizens, rather than a monarch, governs the state. By the late Middle Ages, the most powerful citizens in these republics were members of the new wealthy merchant class. By the 14th century, though, most of the republican governments had failed and the city-states were usually ruled by **despots** or by **oligarchies**. Later in this chapter, you will learn that the powerful city-states of Florence and Venice were ruled by oligarchies and Genoa by a despot.

Warfare among the city-states over territory and trading routes was common. After decades of fighting, the city-states of Florence, Venice, Milan, and Naples finally signed the Treaty of Lodi in 1454, which brought relative stability to the area for 40 years. In this treaty, Milan and Naples formed an alliance with Florence, and Venice was supported by the papacy. In this agreement, no city-state was allowed to become powerful enough to threaten or overthrow any other city-state. Removing the threat of warfare allowed the city-states to focus on improving their trade and amassing huge wealth.

Italy was originally settled by a number of tribes, and over time, powerful city-states developed in those locations. The name *Italy* came from the name of a tribe that settled in the very southern tip of the peninsula. The ancient Romans later used the term *Italy* to refer to the portion of the Italian Peninsula south of Rome.

court: the families, advisors, and other members of a royal or noble household

papacy: the pope and the government of the Roman Catholic Church

republic: a state in which power is held by the people or their representatives

despot: a leader with unlimited power; a tyrant or oppressor

oligarchy: a form of government in which a few people have the power

The papacy moved from Rome to Avignon because at this time, the pope and many top clerics were French.

Several powerful city-states grew in the area that is now called Italy. How might Florence, Venice, and Genoa have used geographic features to protect themselves from enemies?

I wonder … what other city-states in other places existed at this time?

sovereignty: supreme power and authority; the freedom of a country or political unit from outside control

Around the end of the 15th century, the city-states began to send permanent ambassadors to foreign courts or states. The role of the ambassador was to keep in constant touch with governments that could be either potential allies or enemies. Through diplomacy, relationships and alliances, often through marriages, were maintained to reduce threats to **sovereignty** and trading.

Diplomacy became increasingly important to maintain peace among city-states and countries so trade could continue to flourish.

I wonder … what role does diplomacy play in today's world?

Historical categories and their names are often placed on a period long after it is over. The people living between 1350 and 1600 did not use the word *Renaissance* to describe their time in history.

Portrait of Catherine de Medici, unknown French artist, 16th century. To strengthen ties between Florence and France, Catherine de Medici, daughter of the governor of Florence, was married in 1533 to Prince Henri, who became King Henri II of France. Catherine then became the queen of France. Renaissance ideas were spread from royal court to royal court.

Today, many governments establish embassies in other countries. Ambassadors work through diplomacy to promote their own country's economic and policy aims by establishing relationships with the government of the other countries.

SKILLS CENTRE

Turn to **How to Organize Information** in the Skills Centre to review how to use graphic organizers and charts to summarize the information about city-states.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. a. In what ways did contact among people increase during this time?
   b. What effect did contact have on the lives and worldviews of the people?
2. What role did trade play in changing people's worldviews?
3. Discuss in groups: How did the governments in Italian city-states change during the Renaissance? How might these changes in government have affected the daily life of the people? How would the changes have affected worldview?
4. Canada has gone through rapid urbanization in the last 50 years. How do you think this has affected people's identities? How might having most of the population living in cities affect the worldview of Canadians?

Same Time, Different Place

Same Time, Different Place highlights events occurring in other societies around the world in the same time frame as this case study.

Cities, 1400s

Timbuktu, West Africa

Timbuktu (Tombouctou) was an important Islamic trade centre located on the Niger River at the edge of the southern Sahara Desert in what is now the modern country of Mali. As the biggest city in the Songhai Empire, the largest kingdom in Africa, it became an important spiritual, educational, and cultural centre. Its University of Sankore was one of the largest in the world, with 25 000 students. It attracted Islamic scholars from around the then-known world. Knowledge held and developed in Tombouctou made its way to Europe and helped spur the Renaissance.

Cuzco, South America

Cuzco, the richest city in the New World, was the centre of the Inca civilization, the most powerful empire in South America. The empire had a population of about 12 000 000 connected by over 22 000 kilometres of roads stretching from southern Columbia to central Chile. The city was built in the shape of a sacred Puma and had great stone buildings, palaces and temples, and homes for commoners. Temples, buildings, paved roads, and elaborate gardens all shimmered with gold. The richest temple was dedicated to sun worship and was decorated with extravagant amounts of gold and silver.

I wonder … are some of today's large cities becoming like city-states?

Cahokia, Mid-North America

Cahokia is the name given to a large city built by people of the Mississippian culture, believed to be the ancestors of the Osage, Omaha, Ponca, and Quapaw First Nations. Its site is located in the present-day state of Illinois.

Earthen mounds remaining today provide information about this city that existed between 650 and 1400. The largest mound is more than 30 metres high with a base of 316 metres by 241 metres. A large building, about the size of a football field and more than 15 metres tall, stood on top of the mound. This structure was larger than the pyramid of Cheops in Egypt. The plaza for this structure still holds the record for being the largest earthen plaza ever constructed.

The mounds for 109 structures have been found. The city's population of about 40 000 people was larger than that of London. The Cahokia society had trade ties throughout North America.

Top: Timbuktu Engraving, Fumagalli and others. First university set up by Arabs in the Sahara Desert.

Middle: European view of Cuzco, Peru, from Voyages Pittoresque, Carl Nebel

Bottom: Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site

By 1338, Florence was one of the four largest cities in Europe with a population of over 100 000.

How Did the City-State of Florence Reflect the Renaissance Worldview?

Political and Economic Systems

Florence, or Firenza in Italian, developed as a city-state in north-central Italy. It was built on the Arno River, which had been a trade route for centuries. Merchants and traders had prospered in Florence since before the Roman Empire, but during the Renaissance, as trade increased, it became the centre of highly successful bankers and silk and wool merchants. The wealthy bankers supported the pope in Rome; in return, he gave them the financial business of the papacy.

Through their banking and business dealings, Florentines met people from other societies and cultures. They were exposed to new ideas and knowledge that eventually spread to the rest of western Europe.

Florence was the richest of the city-states and became so wealthy that it bought surrounding cities such as Lucca, Arezzo, and Livorno from their rulers. In this way, Florentines extended power and control over more and more of the region.

Like most other Italian city-states, Florence began as a republic, but did not last because of power struggles among various groups. By 1435, one powerful family, the Medici, took control of the city. Under their leadership, Florence became the centre of the Renaissance in Italy.

Carta della Catena, Italian school, 1490. Panoramic view of Florence and River Arno. Map of Florence during the 15th century — the Golden Age. The hilly terrain surrounding Florence was not good for farming, but perfect for raising sheep. As a result, the city became a natural centre for wool and cloth industries.

Social Systems

Although Florentine society was based on a class system, as the merchant class became wealthier, they were able to move up the social ladder and gain status in the community. People in the merchant class were called the *popolo grasso* (the fat people). They organized themselves into **guilds**, which represented the wool manufacturers and wool finishers, silk merchants, and bankers. Guilds were similar to today's unions or professional organizations. Workers and shopkeepers were called *popolo minuto* (the little people). Most of the workers had been peasants who had moved to the city to work in the fabric industries. They were not allowed to be members of the guilds. The nobles, or upper class, still owned most of the land and continued to live on estates outside the city.

guild: an organization of craftsmen or merchants

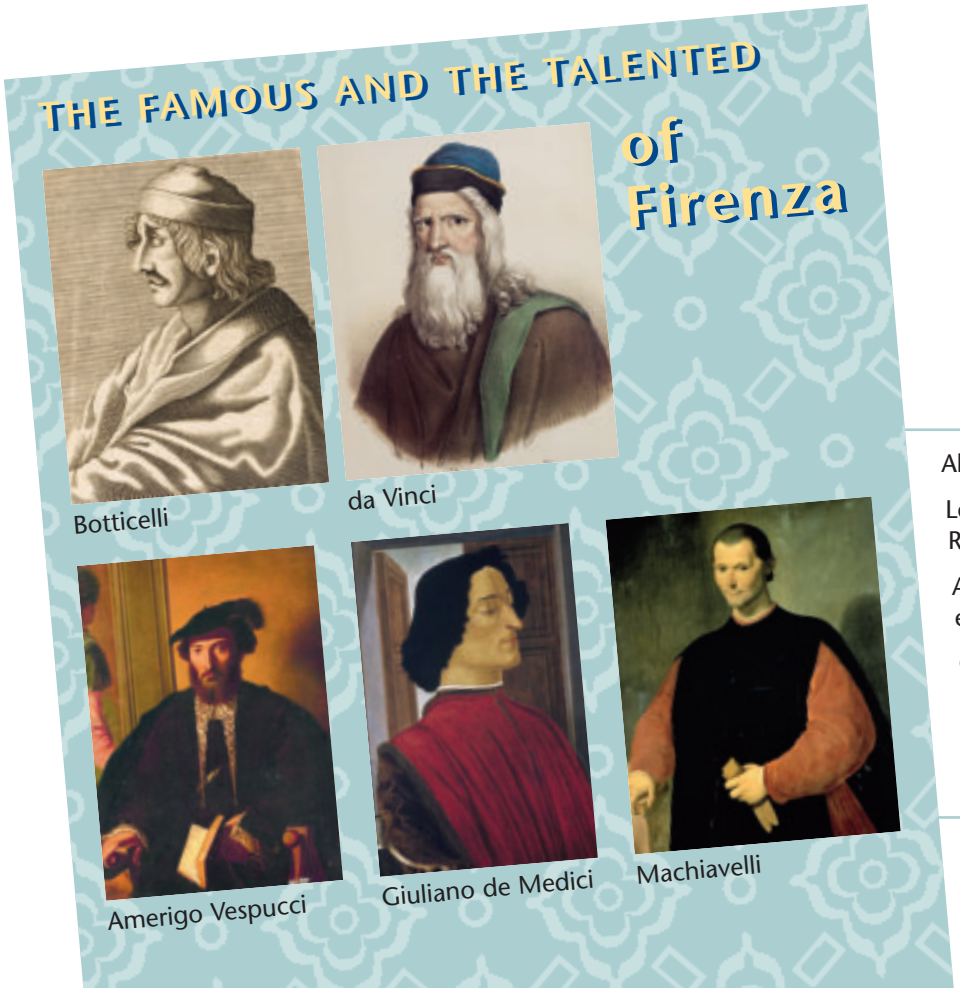
Culture

When the Medici family became the leaders of Florence, the city-state became a major centre of Renaissance culture.

They supported artists, architects, and scholars developing a city rich in works of art, architectural marvels, and scholarly thought. Ideals of citizenship were promoted and those with wealth and power believed they had a responsibility to carry out positive civic works.

The florin was one of the first gold coins produced in western Europe and led to the use of money, rather than bartering (exchanging one product for another product), for purchasing items. Because Florence's banking families were so powerful and influential, and because the coin was of such high-grade gold, the florin became the standard currency of Europe during the early Renaissance.

I wonder … is there a standard currency used around the world today?



Alessandro Botticelli, painter

Leonardo da Vinci, Renaissance man

Amerigo Vespucci, explorer and cartographer

Giuliano de Medici, statesman and patron

Niccolo Machiavelli, political philosopher

The **Profile** feature presents people, places, or events of the time, illustrating their viewpoints and effects on the society of the time.

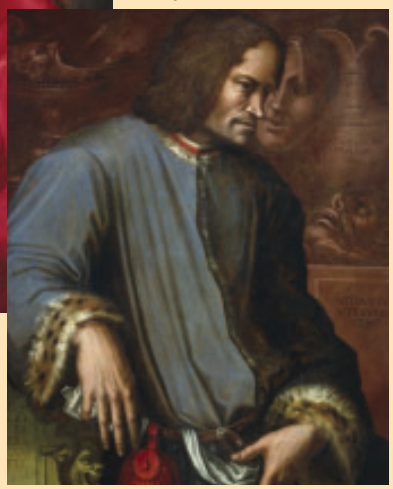
PROFILE

The Medici Family

The Medici family was a powerful influence in Florence for three centuries from the mid-1400s to the mid-1700s. As well as controlling the government, the oligarchy was wealthy enough to

- pay for some of the most beautiful and innovative churches, buildings, and monuments in Florence
- employ and support many of the most famous Renaissance painters, sculptors, and architects
- study and collect the works of ancient Greek and Roman authors
- hold social events to discuss ideas and art

patron of the arts: a person who provides financial or other support for artists



Top: *Cosimo de Medici*, portrait by Pontormo

Right: *Lorenzo de Medici*, portrait by Giorgio Vasari

The Medici were wealthy bankers who sponsored the works of many Renaissance artists, artisans, and sculptors.

Cosimo de Medici was called *pater patrie*, "father of his country" (city-state), because of his support of the arts and public buildings in Florence. Some of these buildings included churches, monasteries, the Medici Library, and the Plato Academy, where scholars gathered to discuss the ideas of the Greek classics. As well as being a generous patron of the arts, he was also an excellent statesman and led the negotiations for the Treaty of Lodi (1454), which brought peace to the city-states of Florence, Venice, Milan, Rome, and Naples.

Cosimo's grandson, Lorenzo de Medici, (1449–1492) was called Lorenzo the Magnificent. He succeeded his grandfather as ruler of Florence and was also a great **patron of the arts**. He supported some of the greatest artists of the Renaissance, including Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, and was himself a poet. Unlike his grandfather, he did not use his money to fund public buildings, but used it to acquire a private collection of antiquities and art. When conspirators tried to murder him and succeeded in killing his brother, the people of Florence supported him and he maintained control of the city-state. Shortly after Lorenzo's death, the Medici lost power when French armies invaded Italy.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. What were some of the details of the elements of worldview of the citizens of Florence — social systems, political and economic systems, and culture — that were presented in the last few pages? Use a graphic organizer to show the details of the Florentine worldview.
2. Why did Florence become an important city-state?
3. How did the Medici family reflect the values of Florentine society?

How Did Venice Contribute to the Italian Renaissance?

Venice, or Venezia in Italian, was founded in the 5th century on shallow islands along the coast of the Adriatic Sea when the outsider Veneto tribe moved to the swampy islands in the lagoon for safety. Venice was ruled by many different groups, but by the 13th century, it was one of the most prosperous trading cities in Europe. Today, Venice is considered one of the most romantic and beautiful cities in the world.

In the Middle Ages, the Byzantine Empire provided exotic trade goods from Asia and the Islamic world to Venice. Venice was located between the Eastern Mediterranean and western Europe and controlled most of the ports in the Adriatic Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. It established trading posts as far east as the Black Sea. Goods brought back from the East by Venice's merchant navy were then shipped to consumers across Europe by land and sea routes. Along with the trade goods, ideas and knowledge from the East were introduced to Europe through this important port city.

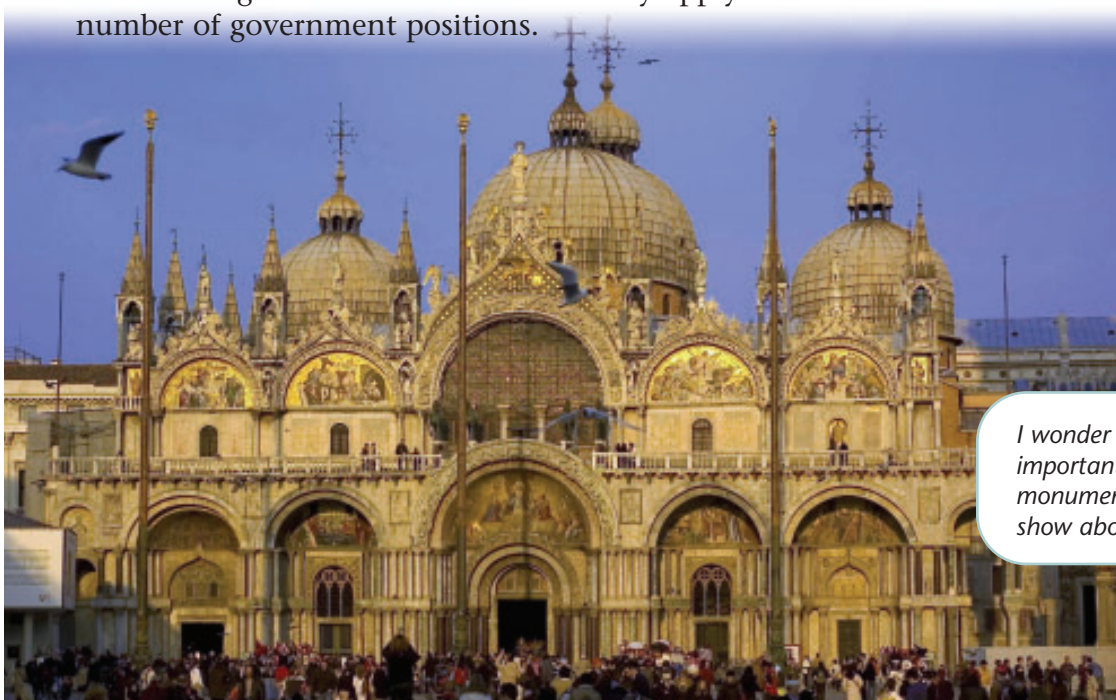
aristocracy: the nobility or those with inherited titles

basilica: a Roman Catholic cathedral of particular honour

Social Systems

There were three social classes in Venice:

- The upper class was the **aristocracy**, the original noble families who had controlled Venice since tribal times and who could vote for the government.
- Below the aristocracy were the *Cittadini Originarii*, the "original citizens," of the Republic who could hold public office but not vote.
- The third social class was the common people, who also had some rights as citizens but could only apply for a limited number of government positions.



San Marco **Basilica**, built between the 11th and 14th centuries, is a mixture of Eastern and Western architectural styles. It is a reminder of Venice's contact with other cultures; Byzantine architects began the construction and early Renaissance architects finished it. Today, the beautiful cathedrals of the city-states are still in use. They show the central role religion played in people's lives during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

I wonder … what do the important buildings and monuments built today show about our worldview?

Marco Polo sailing from Venice in 1271

Marco Polo is famous for his writings about his adventures on a journey to Cathay (China). As a teenager, he travelled with his trader father along the Silk Road. Their journey to Cathay and back took 17 years. Refer to the Silk Road map on pages 16 and 17. When they returned to Venice in 1295, people were fascinated with the story of his experiences and the exotic societies he encountered. He recorded his story in the book *Il Milione (The Million)*, which was read with excitement across Europe. Some historians consider his story a collection of tales from a variety of sources rather than a true story of his personal adventures.

Venice was the main trading centre with the Islamic world since the early Middle Ages. Many new concepts related to mathematics, navigation, trade, and trade goods were first introduced to Europe through its traders. Many words with Arabic origins or from other places along the Silk Road were adopted into English to explain the new concepts.

Admiral — *amir al-baHr* "commander of the sea"

Alfalfa — *alfas,fas,ah* "fodder"

Algebra — *al-jebr* "reintegration"

Calico — *Qaliqu:t* (from Calicut, a city in India)

Candy — *qandi* "sugared" (from India)

Cheque — *sha:h* "king"

Coffee — *qahwah* "coffee"

Cotton — *qutn* "cotton"

Crimson — *qirmazi*, from *qirmiz*, the insect that provides the dye

Giraffe — *zara:fa* "giraffe"

Jar — *jarrah* "large earthen vase"

Lemon — *laymu:n* "lemon"

Lilac — *li:la:k* "lilac"

Mattress — *matrah* "mat, cushion"

Mummy — *mu:miya* "embalmed body"

Orange — *na:ranj* "orange" (originally from Sanskrit)

Safari — *safari:y* "journey"

Satin — *zaytu:ni* (from Zaytun, a city in China)

Sofa — *s,uffah* "raised dais with cushions"

Sugar — *sukkar* "sugar" (originally from Sanskrit)

Tambourine — *tanbu:r* "small tambour"

Tariff — *ta riifa* "notification, price list"

Zero — *s,ifr* "empty"

Government

Venice was a republic. The head of government in Venice was called the Doge. In 1297, a group of wealthy noblemen of the aristocracy ruled that only their families could vote for the doge and belong to the government, or Great Council. These families, which made up only 2% of the population, made up the oligarchy that ruled Venice. However, many of the Cittadini Originarii became wealthy merchants and were able to buy positions in the aristocracy.

The Senate and Great Council made government decisions. The doge headed the Senate and was elected for life. He often had very little power, being dominated by the members of the Great Council.

I wonder … how does the government in Venice compare to the governments in Alberta and Canada?

Scuole

The citizens of Venice implemented a new social institution, the scuola, out of civic duty, tied to religious beliefs. Scuole were associations that met for prayer sessions, collected money for good causes and, most importantly, held masses for their members who were sick, dying, or dead.

Venetians lived in fear of punishment in the afterlife for sins committed in this life. Donations to the needy and good deeds were thought to lessen the punishment awaiting them at death. People could combine their efforts through the brotherhood of the scuole and achieve this important duty for all their members.

Smaller scuole provided charity for their own members, being the forerunner of social systems such as employment insurance. Rich and poor members donated according to their wealth, and the pooled money supported elderly and sick members and their widows and children.

Scuole is the plural form of *scuola*.

Venice, from *Galleria del Carte Geografiche*, Egnazio Danti, 1580–1583. Venice was a powerful city-state that controlled many parts of the existing trade routes between Europe and Asia.

Venice canal, present day. Much of Venice's magic comes from its water-filled canals that are still used as streets.

armory: a place where weapons and ammunition are kept

Two female Carnival masks. Venice is famous for its Carnevale celebrations. *Carnival* comes from the Latin word for "Farewell, meat!" It is a celebration held before Lent, during which Christians were not allowed to eat meat. Lent is a religious period of fasting leading up to Easter.

The Venice Carnival tradition began around 1162 to celebrate a victory over a nearby enemy city. As the years passed, the celebration became a tradition and by 1268, the partiers used masks to hide their faces, a tradition that still continues today. By covering their faces, the rich and the poor were equal and could escape from the rules of their social class.

I wonder … how do some people today observe Lent?

I wonder … do other religions have practices similar to Lent?

Scuole grandi were large scuole, often with more than 500 members, with many wealthy members. They gradually accumulated huge wealth. They then provided charity to needy citizens throughout Venice. They also gained status for their scuole by enhancing the city of Venice: building meeting halls of grand architecture, decorated with valuable works of art.

Venice Gains Importance

Venice became an important city-state for many reasons:

- It had a stable form of government.
- It was more successful in sea trade than any other city-state, in large part because it had built up a strong shipyard, naval base, and **armory**. The merchant class became very wealthy through trade with the East.
- The new merchant class supported the arts, so artists flocked to the city.
- Venice became the centre of the European book trade. It was the first Italian city-state to use the mechanical printing press, invented in the mid-1400s, for commercial purposes. Books of all kinds were printed: Latin, Greek, and Hebrew texts for scholars; romances, novels, and elementary readers; musical scores; atlases and maps; illustrated anatomical and botanical texts.
- It also had a famous university that promoted the study of science, medicine, and law.

View of Venice from the water, present day

Marco Polo, adventurer and writer

Jacopo Sansovino, sculptor

Jacopo Robusti Tintoretto, painter

Giovanni Bellini, painter, influenced with his use of colour and light

Aldus Manutius, established Aldine printing press to publish Greek and Latin classics

Other Venetians

Jacopo Palma, known for his portraits of women

Johanne of Speier, first printer in Venice

Nicolas Jenson, one of the first printers to design the Roman type for printing presses

Lombardo family, sculptors and architects

REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. What were some of the details of the elements of worldview of the citizens of Venice — social systems, political and economic systems, and culture — that were presented in the last few pages? Use a graphic organizer to show the details of the Venetian worldview.
2. Why did Venice become an important city-state?
3. Discuss in groups: Venice was home to many artists and architects. Why do you think there are no women artists shown on the bulletin board on this page?
4. Compare and contrast parts of Canada's social system to the Venetian system of scuole.

How Did Genoa Help Shape the Renaissance Worldview?

Genoa, or Genova in Italian, is Italy's main commercial port city today. Located in northwestern Italy on the Tyrrhenean Sea, it is sandwiched on a narrow strip of land between the sea and the mountains to the north. The name *Genoa* came from its ancient name, Genua, a city supposedly founded by the two-headed Roman god Giano, protector of ships and coins. Genoa is a city of two faces: one that looks inland and the other that looks towards the sea. The old city was surrounded by high walls to protect its inhabitants from invaders from the mountains and from the sea.

Genoa had been a crossroads of traffic and culture between western Europe and the Mediterranean for centuries. Most of the trade between Italy and northern Europe crossed this narrow strip of land. Its location and the initiative of its citizens made Genoa one of medieval Europe's major centres of trade and commerce.

Beginning with the first crusade in the Middle Ages, crusaders poured into Genoa from England, France, and other Western European areas. Genovese fleets transported the crusading armies to ports in the Holy Land. In return for their services, the Genoans were paid well and granted important trading privileges among the Christian-controlled areas of the East.

Walled cities were common in the past; the barriers protected the citizens from attack. La ville de Québec (Québec City) was established 400 years ago on the banks of the St. Lawrence River by settlers from France. Vieux Québec, Québec's Old Town, is the only city in North America whose fortified walls still exist. Vieux Québec was declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1985.

View of Genoa, 1481. Genoa was a walled city. How might living within a walled city affect the worldview of the people?

In 1261, the Genovese navy gained control of Constantinople, the largest city in Europe and, thus, the trade in the Black Sea. Genoa's traders quickly developed markets at key ports on this sea. They exported wine, olive oil, and wool to the area, and imported furs, corn, spices, and Persian goods.

Wealthy families in Genoa saw this expansion and trade as an opportunity and founded a powerful bank, the Banco San Giorgio (Bank of St. George), to finance both the trade and the navy of Genoa. Genovese merchants, shipbuilders, traders, and the navy were able to borrow money at low rates and were, therefore, able to build more ships and hire more sailors. More ships allowed Genovese traders to expand to the Eastern Mediterranean and to increase trade with the Arab Muslim world, bringing huge wealth to the city-state of Genoa.

At the same time, Venice, the strongest city-state in Italy, also developed key trading ports in the Eastern Mediterranean. Genoa and Venice were rivals, fighting to gain control of lucrative trading posts throughout the Aegean Sea, the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Black Sea. The two city-states signed the Peace of Turin in 1381, which allowed each city-state to maintain its current trading posts without interference from the other. This reduced the need to put valuable resources into war and defense; the city-states could focus on trade and business.

During the Middle Ages, Genoa was a republic, governed by rival clans or families. In the 1300s, the families struggling for control agreed to a truce, each more or less controlling a section of the city. This period of peace allowed the city to focus on expanding its trading empire. Because of the economic success of the city, the population increased to almost 100 000 by 1400.

Your favourite pair of jeans owes its name to *Gênes* (pronounced *jen*), the French name for Genoa. Blue cotton cloth, a noted Genovese product, was exported to France, and from there to areas of the English-speaking world in bales marked Gênes.

Genovese Trading Empire, 1200s

This map shows Genoa's trade routes in 1261. How might these routes have led to conflict with the city-state of Venice?

fresco: a watercolour painting done on a wall or ceiling on wet plaster

University of Genoa, present day. The University of Genoa is one of the oldest in Italy. It dates back to the 13th century and became prominent for the study of law, medicine, philosophy, and theology. Today, it has more than 40 000 students.

Genoa's strength declined after 1463 when it lost Constantinople, the gateway to its trade in the Black Sea, in a battle to the Ottoman Turkish Empire. The Italian city-state of Milan, and later France, took control of Genoa. Although the Genovese families maintained their wealth and some independence, the power of Genoa was not revived until 1528 when Andrea Doria, a navy commander and statesman, became dictator. During his rule, Genoa experienced the Renaissance in art and architecture that had already occurred in other areas of Italy.

Wealthy Genovese families paid for the creation of daring architecture, splendid **frescoes**, and imposing, noble palaces. The families competed to commission palaces and art masterpieces by the most famous architects and artists of the time. They hired master artists from Rome, Florence, Venice, and northern Europe to beautify their homes and public buildings.

THE FAMOUS AND THE TALENTED of Genoa

Andrea Doria, statesman

Ottaviano Grimaldi, statesman

Christopher Columbus, explorer

Doria

Grimaldi

Columbus

The Grimaldi family began ruling a small piece of land on the coast just west of Genoa in 1297. They have ruled the Principality of Monaco, which is much like a city-state, for more than 700 years and have made it into a prime destination for the world's wealthy and famous. Who is its ruler today?

I wonder … how has Monaco survived as a city-state from the Renaissance to present day?

REFLECT AND RESPOND

1. What were some of the details of the elements of worldview of the citizens of Genoa — social systems, political and economic systems, and culture — that were presented in the last few pages? Use a graphic organizer to show the details of the Genovese worldview.
2. Why did Genoa become an important city-state?
3. Discuss in groups: How might competition between Venice and Genoa have contributed to the spread of Renaissance ideas? What cities in today's world are in competition with each other? Why does this happen? What aspects of worldview are illustrated by this competition?

PERSPECTIVES ON HISTORY

Whose History Is Recorded in History Books and Other Records?

Through whose eyes do we see the history of a period such as the Renaissance?

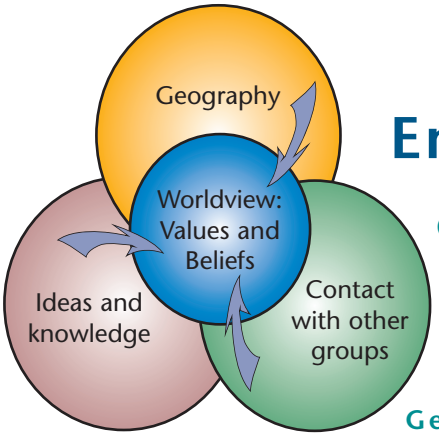
For the most part, the history that is recorded is that of the powerful and the rich. The names and exploits of the rulers — the kings and queens and presidents and premiers — are the ones that will be found in the official records of a society. Monuments and statues record their likenesses. It is through their viewpoints, and those of the writers and artists who record their lives and aims and ambitions, that we most often see history.

Before the Renaissance, almost all the historical records of western Europe were of the aristocracy and Church officials. During the Renaissance, a wealthy merchant class grew, gained power, and learned to read and write. They could afford to have portraits painted of themselves and their families, and they could write journals. Many of these paintings and writings remain today for historians to study.

In the Middle Ages and early Renaissance, the stories of women, the young, the poor, and the powerless were rarely recorded in print or in artwork. The names of common people were sometimes listed in records of births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths. Some documents listed details of their landholdings and taxes. Other details were recorded in court and legal documents. Today, through the study of these records and artifacts found in archaeological digs, we are beginning to find out about the lives of the common people during the Renaissance and what they might have believed about the events occurring around them.

Perspectives on History examines sources and documents from which historical information is obtained. It explores the group perspectives and personal points of view from which events were recorded.

Marchese Ludovico Gonzaga III of Mantua, his wife Barbara of Brandenburg, children, courtiers, and dog Rubino, from the *Cameradegei Sposi* fresco in Palazzo Ducale, Andrea Mantegna, 1465–1474. Ludovico Gonzaga (1414–1478) was another patron of the arts who lived in Mantua, Italy. The Gonzaga family ruled over Mantua, which was one of the smaller city-states. It had a population of about 40 000. Gonzaga hired Andrea Mantegna, one of Italy's treasured artists, as his court painter. What kind of society do you see in this portrait by Mantegna?



End-of-Chapter

Conclusion

The Italian Renaissance worldview grew out of all the changes that occurred in Italy after the Middle Ages. These are factors that influenced the Italian Renaissance worldview:

Geography

- The city-states on and near the Mediterranean Sea had access to eastern trade routes.
- Italy's location allowed contact with Islamic and other civilizations.
- Italy had little agricultural land. Its citizens pursued livelihoods other than agriculture.
- The mountains made a natural barrier to enemies, allowing the city-states to concentrate on trade, commerce, and the arts rather than defence.

Ideas and knowledge

- Ruins from the classical Greek and Roman civilizations surrounded the Italians, making them want to reclaim the lost knowledge of their ancestors.
- Crusaders and traders brought back many of the classical writings and new ideas and knowledge from the Islamic and Asian worlds.
- Renaissance scholars rediscovered the classical literature of the Greeks and Romans. This promoted new ways of thinking about the role of the individual.
- New ideas and knowledge from Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Muslim, and Asian sources valued the importance and worth of the individual. Individuals began to believe they were responsible for the directions their lives took.

Contact with other groups

- When the Crusades started, trading ships from Italian city-states carried crusaders and goods to the Holy Land. They returned with exotic luxury goods from Asia to sell to the rest of western Europe.
- The increased trade and contact with other societies created a wealthy merchant or middle class that supported Renaissance arts and architecture.
- Ideas and knowledge from Islamic and other civilizations became part of European culture and worldview.

Review and Synthesize

1. Compare the powerful city-states of Florence, Venice, and Genoa.
   - What did they have in common that made them powerful?
   - What was unique about each one?
   - How do you think the geography of each area contributed to its success as a city-state?
2. Imagine a new student has just joined your class. You have been asked to create a graphic organizer that will summarize the key ideas from this chapter for the new student to use as a study guide. Consider using technology to create this organizer. Pair up with a classmate and simulate a study session where you will share your organizers with each other.
3. Think about the Worldview Investigation that you did at the beginning of the chapter. Conduct another Think–Pair–Share discussion to review how contact with other groups shaped the Renaissance worldview. How was their experience similar to the Canadian experience in which contact among people has shaped our worldview?

SKILLS CENTRE

Turn to **How to Organize Information** in the Skills Centre to review how to use graphic organizers and charts to summarize the information about city-states.

Inquiry

4. Think about the reasons behind wealthy citizens of the Italian city-states donating money to create art and beautiful buildings for their cities. Plan a research project to find out about one of these examples. What were the motives of the donor? What does this philanthropy show about his or her values and beliefs? What does this show about our worldview?

Show What You Know

5. How did contact among people shape the worldview of Renaissance Italy?
6. How did the lives of people change during this period? Use a chart or graphic organizer to summarize your ideas.
7. How did the development of the Italian city-states contribute to changing worldviews during the Renaissance?

Closure

8. **Share**: Participate in a Think–Pair–Share activity to select one picture or image from this chapter that is the best example of the Renaissance worldview. The pictures may be in the text, on the walls of your classroom, or in collections of your classmates or your teacher.
9. **Discuss**: The Canadian worldview has been shaped by numerous experiences of contact among people.
10. **Reflect**: Throughout this chapter, you have been presented with opportunities to examine some of the values and beliefs that make up the Canadian worldview and many that were present in the Renaissance worldview. Now think about one of the values or beliefs that you have, as a person living in Canada, that is similar to the values or beliefs of people during the Renaissance.